



DHS Matters!

Michigan Department of Human Services • Lansing, Michigan • November 6, 2006
Produced by DHS Office of Communications, Suite 1510, Grand Tower, Lansing
Submit stories by e-mail to DHS-Newsletter@michigan.gov



Grace Carafelly with her "Tribute to Josephine Baker" doll. This was the first place and grand prize winner.



Tie second place (left): **Laura Serpien** with her "Victorian" doll.

Tie second place (right): **Sharon Wilson** with her "Christmas" doll.



Third place (left): **Stephanie Murray** with her "Cute and Cuddly" doll.



Macomb County Warren District "Goodfellow's Doll 2006 Campaign"

From LaChay Wilson, Family Independence Specialist & Volunteer Coordinator

Macomb DHS Warren District Office

WilsonL@michigan.gov

The Warren District of the Macomb County Department of Human Services started this year's Goodfellow's Doll campaign with a cupcake & punch reception to thank all of the parents who pledged to adopt and dress a doll.

The reception, held Sept. 27, was a success with all 42 dolls being adopted. The following four weeks resulted in much anticipation leading up to the Oct. 25 "District Favorite" judging competition.

Don't forget to vote!

All completely dressed dolls were on display for the entire office to cast ballots for their favorite dolls. The decisions anguished all voters because all the dolls were unique as well as beautiful.

The next day the winners for first, second, and third place were announced. There was a tie for second place.

The first place and grand prize winner was **Grace Carafelly** with her "Tribute to Josephine Baker" doll. The grand prize award contained gift certificates to Baskin Robbins, Dunkin' Donuts, McDonald's, and a DVD of "The Little Princess."

Second place went to **Laura Serpien** with her "Victorian" doll and **Sharon Wilson** with her "Christmas" doll. Third place went to **Stephanie Murray** with her "Cute and Cuddly" doll. This year's event proved to be a great morale booster and we look forward to next year's campaign!



Click to read...

Local office stories.....2

News you can use.....3

Your letters.....4

Wayne County raises over \$4,000 for cancer programs

From Renee Fluker

Wayne County DHS, Detroit

FlukerR@michigan.gov

Wayne County DHS employees can take pride knowing their volunteer efforts raised more than \$4,182 to support cancer programs. Wayne County employees contributed in support of Lee Denim Day, part on a national promotion where supporters paid to wear denim to work that day. Lee National Denim Day was held on Friday, Oct. 6. Wayne County held it on Thursday, Oct. 5 so it didn't conflict with DHS causal day on Friday.



"It is a great pleasure to report Wayne County DHS employees' contribution in support of Lee Denim Day," said Wayne County DHS director **Jerome Rutland**. "The Denim Day program launched its second decade with a new beneficiary – the Women's Cancer Programs of the Entertainment Industry Foundation (EIF). EIF is the charitable foundation of the entertainment industry and has a remarkable track record in funding results-driven breast cancer research."

Rutland said the new partnership supports very specific breast cancer research projects including:

- Establishment of the Lee Jeans Translational Laboratories and Fellowships for Breast Cancer Research at seven leading research institutions across the country.
- Support for the EIF Breast Biomarker Discovery Project, a multi-year effort by world-class scientists to develop a blood test for early detection of breast cancer.
- The National Breast Cancer Coalition Fund to create Web-based and print resources that will offer individuals with breast cancer, those at risk and their families unbiased, evidence-based information about diagnosis and treatment options.

"Thank you for your support of this effort," Rutland said. "Your generosity has exceeded our expectations and surpassed the totals of previous years." Special thanks are due to **Sandra Szelinga**, section manager at the Wayne County Greenfield-Joy District, who coordinated this year's effort.

■ For more on Lee National Denim Day go to <http://www.denimday.com/>



Michigan earns national award for innovative fraud detection in child care and food assistance; effort identified more than \$9 million in fraud

Members of award-winning team (above from left): **Rich Burgis, Jim Tepin, Murali Mahadevan, David Russell, Raymond Taetsch, Joanne Creede, Alan Kimichik, Kenneth O'Hara, Neal Zuzga and Jim Davis**. The National Association of State Chief Information Officers gave an award to the DHS Office of Inspector General for innovative use of technology for fraud detection Oct. 17. In partnership with Michigan Department of Information Technology, DHS implemented innovative techniques to battle day care and food assistance fraud. The DHS links provider and recipient data with wage and national food assistance data. The efforts identified \$9.2 million in documented day care fraud in FY 2005 and identified another \$3.2 million in Food Assistance savings. Russell, Taetsch, Creede, Kimichik and O'Hara are members of the Office of Inspector General and others in the photo are DIT employees or contractors. Read the news release at www.michigan.gov/dhs

Two new QuickKnowledge courses offered

From Janet Waterstradt

DHS Office of Professional Development

WaterstradtJ@michigan.gov

The Office of Professional Development recently added two new QuickKnowledge courses to their Web-based course offering that are available online to DHS employees. They are:

■ ***Succeeding as an Administrative Assistant*** teaches ways administrative staff can effectively support their manager and staff and maintain control of office operations.



■ ***Moving from Technical Specialist to Supervisor*** helps technical professionals develop the management and human relations skills that can help them become effective managers and leaders.

These courses are available at no cost to all DHS employees. Each course takes about one hour to complete and can be done at the employee's convenience.

To access the QuickKnowledge courses:

- Go to DHS-Net.
- Click on "Department Websites".
- Select Office of Professional Development.
- Under "Learn It Now" click on "QuickKnowledge courses."

Systematic Stress Management Program

Michigan Employee Service Program

www.michigan.gov/esp

"Summer time and the living is easy." There is some truth to this old song's lyric. Summer seems to be a time full of family, friends, vacations, cookouts and fun. We tend to feel more relaxed and attitudes tend to be more casual, both at home and at work. It's almost as if all the positives of summer outweigh the stresses and demands of life.

However, with the fall season and anticipation of cold winter days comes the return of what many of us perceive as "real" life. It may seem like there are fewer outlets to release stress and tension and it can become easier to focus on our problems. Autumn also brings anticipation of the holiday season and the increased demands that the season often entails.

Your Employee Service Program offers an excellent online tool to help you manage the stress that the change in seasons can bring. ESP's **Systematic Stress Management Program** is available 24/7 and can be accessed at your convenience. It is a free and confidential service designed to provide you with the information and assistance to help you manage the stress in your life. You can customize your own personal stress management plan by choosing from the program's seven modules:

- Understanding stress.
- Type A and B behaviors.
- Relaxation training.
- Stress management at work.
- Thinking differently.
- Communication and stress.
- Time management.

All the exercises and tests can be printed out, a feature that is useful in case you want to discuss your results with an ESP counselor, another professional, friend or family member. To access this free, confidential service log onto the Employee Service Program Web site www.michigan.gov/esp and click on **Online Stress Management Program**.

While ESP's Systematic Stress Management Program can be a powerful tool to help you make your life more manageable, it is not intended to be a substitute for professional counseling or medical services. If you are seeking professional assistance you may wish to contact your insurance company or the Employee Service Program toll free at 1-800-521-1377 or call 373-7630 in Lansing.

Date: Oct. 23
To: DHS Matters!
Subj: My caseworkers

Lisa Balcer is the caseworker for my grandchildren. I am in the process of gaining guardianship of them with the assistance of the DHS office. I want to thank Lisa for her continued support. My daughter has made some bad choices in her life that resulted in her children being placed in foster care. After many months of therapy, she is still making the wrong choices. Lisa and **Belinda Blanchard** have been very supportive in letting me visit my grandchildren throughout this terrible ordeal and are now assisting me with the transition of their placement. Belinda even went so far as to personally pick up my oldest grandson on Christmas Eve so that he could spend Christmas with our family. I would like to become licensed as a foster care provider to educate myself about the Michigan DHS and to provide a loving family home for my grandchildren. I would like to thank everyone at the Shiawassee County DHS who has helped with taking care of my grandchildren, especially Lisa and Belinda.

Christine Hoover

Lennon

■ *Lisa Balcer and Belinda Blanchard are services specialists with Shiawassee County.*

Your letters,
intercepted
and otherwise

Date: Oct. 20
To: Janet Kurnick-Ziegler, Manager
DHS Program Coordination & Support, Lansing

Subj: Kathy Pabst

Kathy Pabst is obtaining information for the auditors pertaining to the SSA death match that is completed at DCH for FIP clients who receive Medicaid. I just wanted to pass on that Kathy has been a life saver when it comes to this subject. The auditors were ready to have a major finding that the FIP program was not completing a tape match with the SSA death match but Kathy informed the auditor of the process and displayed her expertise during follow-up questions. Kathy will be supplying the auditor with the needed documentation to support this process. Just want to pass on how much Kathy's assistance is appreciated and her knowledge has saved a finding on the audit.

Margo Yaklin

Finance Specialist

DHS Family Support Services, Lansing

■ *Kathy Pabst is an analyst in DHS Program Coordination and Support focusing on Medicaid eligibility-related programs and efficient ongoing functioning of automated systems. "We have had a long-standing finding related to information exchange between SSA, DCH and DHS to ensure appropriate handling on FIP-Medicaid cases for folks SSA reports as deceased," said Pratin Trivedi, director of DHS Project Financing. "Kathy, through her knowledge and expertise of all the technology environments, was able to describe the processes and provide needed documentation to the auditor."*

Date: Oct. 5
To: Patricia Sera, District Manager
Macomb County DHS Sterling Heights District

Subj: Ajsa Bozhdaraj

I am writing to express my appreciation for services, respect and empathy I received (from) Ajsa Bozhdaraj. In May 2004 my life took an unexpected turn for the worst. I went from a master's level college graduate, who volunteered and worked full-time, to an unemployed, uninsured person with deteriorating health problems. As a result of several major eye surgeries I became blind in one eye and unable to drive or do several things. I was unable to work and be a productive citizen. As my quality of life deteriorated I became hopeless and went through a period of depression. I had lost all hope that I would ever work again or move forward in my life. For the first time in my life I could not meet my own needs and was desperate for some assistance. Mrs. Bozhdaraj is the caseworker that, for the first time in months, had given me a sense of hope for the future. She offered me support and encouragement along with useful resources that aided me in recuperating. Ms. Bozhdaraj went above and beyond her expectations as a case manager. When I was approved for the Adult Benefit Waiver I was able to focus on my health and relieve some of the stresses in my life. Months later I am working full-time, my health remains stable, and I have recently become engaged. I often think about her and how her care and concern allowed me to fill in the missing links and get my life back on track, I truly believe that, if it was not for her and her help, it would have been nearly impossible to move forward. It is truly a good feeling to know that people like her represent the DHS.

Drita Gjela

Shelby Township

■ *Ajsa Bozhdaraj is an eligibility specialist with the Macomb County Sterling Heights District office.*

DHS Matters! is a product of Michigan's Department of Human Services
Marianne Udow, Director • Karen Stock, Director, Office of Communications
Larry VanDeSande, editor • Submit stories by e-mail to: DHS-Newsletter@michigan.gov